

WASATCH STAKE SEMINARY HISTORY

1918 - 1953

May 25, 1953

George Strelbel, Principal

The problem of a seminary in Wasatch Stake was first considered by the Stake Presidency on March 23, 1918. The decision to secure a teacher was made March 31 of that same year. The Stake Presidency at this time consisted of Joseph R. Murdock, President; James C. Jensen and G. Frank Ryan, as Counsellors and David A. Broadbent, as Stake Clerk. They applied to the First Presidency of the Church for a Seminary and on April 20, the First Presidency granted their request and appropriated the sum of \$1200.00 to pay the first annual salary of a teacher. This grant was made on condition that the Stake provide a suitable building in which Seminary classes might be held. This condition was met on April 26, when the Bishopric of the Heber Third Ward tendered the use of their Ward House for Seminary purposes, providing that the Stake assume the responsibility for paying for the extra expense for heat, janitorial service, etc. Fredrick Crook was Bishop of the Third Ward at this time. This kindly offer was gladly accepted and on May 26 Ernest A. Jacobsen was employed as the first Seminary instructor at an annual salary of \$1200.00 as appropriated by the First Presidency.

When school commenced in the fall of the year, it was decided that the Third Ward Chapel was too far away from the high school for convenience of the students, and on September 15 arrangements were made to hold Seminary classes in one of the vacant rooms of the high school building. One hundred dollars per year was fixed as the rental price to be paid the high school. Seminary work was carried on throughout the school year as scheduled though an outbreak of influenza occurred during the year and seriously interfered with all school work. The February 2, 1919, report of instructor E.A. Jacobsen showed an enrollment of 198 students in the Book of Mormon, Utah History, Old Testament, and New Testament classes which were held that year. It was a broken year and none of the students completed the required work for graduation.

Seminary work continued during its second year, 1919-1920, with E. A. Jacobsen returning to carry on the work. School commenced on September 21, and Seminary classes were held in the Heber Third Ward Chapel as had been provided for the previous

year. On January 4, 1920, the sum of \$107.80 was paid to Brother Jacobsen and the Heber Third Ward for building expenses, and it was decided to apportion this amount among the wards according to the number of students in Seminary from the various wards. On March 21, 1920, the Tidwell lot, just north of the high school, was purchased for the sum of \$2500.00. This property to be used for Seminary purposes.

During the summer of 1920, E. A. Jacobsen was released as the Seminary instructor in order that he might serve as Principal of the Vernal Academy. Later he became Superintendent of the North Summit School District. Seminary work continued in the fall of 1920 with Ralph F. Nilsson as Seminary instructor. He reported a seminary enrollment during that year of 137 students. He taught classes in Old Testament, New Testament, and Church History and Doctrine. Seventy-five students were reported as being enrolled in the courses in Church History although all of them did not finish the year's work. The names of Eva Wilson and Mary Rasband, who later became teachers in the high school, were listed as members of this class.

Brother Nilsson was re-employed as Seminary teacher for 1921-22, and reported an enrollment of 153 students, of whom 108 were in Old Testament; 37 in New Testament; and 8 enrolled in the course in Church History and Doctrine. Of this number only four completed the year's work. These were Vida Broadbent, Reta Brown, Electa Johnson, and Jennie Pyper. In 1922-23 an enrollment of 154 students was reported. Of this number nine were enrolled in Church History and Doctrine and seven completed the course. These included Linden Chapman, Almond Clegg, Dean Fortie, LaVora Giles, Walter Montgomery, Lorraine Murdock, and Dean Fortie.

David A. Broadbent was appointed principal of the Seminary in the fall of 1923 and had an enrollment of 187 students during that year. Of this number twenty-two completed the three years of work and were graduated. Included in this class were Clyde Broadbent, Ellis Clyde, Reed Kohler, etc. In 1924-25, there were 253 students enrolled and 32 graduated.

In 1925 the old Jonathan Clegg home (Tidwell property) in which Seminary Classes had been held the previous year, was torn down and the useable material was made available for use in the construction of the new Seminary building which

was erected on that site. The Heber Tithing and Grocery building was also torn down and a part of the material used in the new building. Later in the year when the Heber Central School Building burned down the useable materials were purchased and worked into the new Seminary building. It is a rather interesting coincidence that the materials of three old buildings in Heber became a part of the new Seminary structure, which was planned for a dual purpose - that of a Seminary building and also for stake administrative purposes, the two being combined. The cost of this building with furniture and equipment was \$25,000, one-half of which was provided from general church funds by President Heber J. Grant. Don Carlos Young was the architect; the Wasatch Stake Presidency was the building committee; and D. A. Broadbent was the Superintendent of Construction. The balance of the cost was raised locally, the nine wards of the stake contributing money, labor, and materials toward its construction.

When Seminary work started in the fall of 1925, two teachers were employed for this first year in the new building. Heber M. Rasband was chosen as assistant to D. A. Broadbent for the year 1925-26. There was a total enrollment of 254 students. Of this number 58 were graduated in the spring. Some of the members of this class included Alfred Chapman, Douglas Carlile, Daniel Crook (died 1939 of heart ailment), Wendell Duke, Roy Huffaker, Lealie North, Mina Rasband, Otie Sweat, Mainie Watson, Wilson Young, etc.

In 1926-27, D. A. Broadbent and Heber M. Rasband continued the work with 254 students enrolled and 37 graduating. Some members of this group included Farel Anderson, Howard Duke, Helen DeGraff, Zelma McNaughton, Owen Probst, and Paul Van Wagoner. The Seminary building was dedicated May 29, 1927, by President Charles W. Nibley.

In 1927-28 D. A. Broadbent taught alone. He had 252 students and graduated 44. This number included Ralph Hicken, Elvin Giles, Welby Young, etc. A comment made by D. A. Broadbent in the Annual Report suggested, "In general, the year's work has been regular without specific features. The course in Church History and Doctrine has been so heavy and full that much of the joy and soul, which should enrich the lives

of our boys and girls, has been taken out. The urge to complete the course has been too costly to the joy and testimony of the boys and girls".

For 1928-29 D. A. Broadbent taught alone. He had 239 students and graduated 48. His report showed 99 students in Old Testament, 68 in New Testament, 47 in Church History and 15 in Junior Seminary work. The total number was approximately 70 per cent of the total high school enrollment for that year.

In 1929-30 there were enrolled 107 students in Old Testament, 68 in New Testament, and 54 in Church History. An interesting comment made at the end of the year showed that of the Wasatch Stake Seminary graduates; 27 had filled foreign missions; 29 had served and were serving as professional teachers; 4 were graduate nurses; and 41 had married and none of them were divorced.

The annual report for 1930-31 showed a total enrollment in the high school of 335 students, of these 278 had taken or were taking Seminary classes. 118 in Old Testament, 79 in New Testament, and 52 in Church History and Doctrine. Members of the graduating class included Don Hicken, Marion Hiatt, Delbert Sweat, Leon Ritchie, and Robert Watson.

The high school enrollment in 1931-32 increased to 403, of whom some 391 were L. D. S. 266 were registered for Seminary work. 57 students completed the work required for graduation. The comment was made that scarcely any of the L. D. S. students in high school complete the four years in high school without taking one or more of the Seminary courses. During the school year, 66 honors were awarded in the high school; 54 of these were awarded to Seminary students. These 54 included the Valedictorian, all student body officers but one, eleven out of the twelve members of the school paper staff, all the cast in the school drama, eight out of eleven principals in the opera, all the school debators but two, and just one-half of the school athletes.

In 1932-33 the Seminary enrollment dropped to 185 students, a decrease of 81. This was due to the new policy of the L. D. S. Department of Education which required the alternating of classes; and as a result classes in Old Testament were not offered that year. A project was conducted during the year in Temperance and Self Improvement.